

us that college was too expensive and that college price increases were threatening the ability of American families to provide for their children's education. That legislation, which has since been enacted, established a National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education. The job of the Commission was to evaluate why tuitions have increased to two-to-three times the rate of inflation every year, and to advise Congress and the President on steps which could be taken to bring college prices under control.

The Commission has since finished its work and gone out of existence. The legislation we are introducing today will implement a number of the recommendations of the Commission. Specifically, this legislation will provide students and parents with better information to keep colleges accountable and higher education affordable by requiring the Secretary of Education to work with institutions to develop a clear set of standards for reporting college costs and prices. Under out bill, the Secretary of Education will redesign the collection of Federal information on college costs and prices to make it more useful and timely to the public.

The College Tuition Reduction and Information Act will allow students to make more informed choices about the level of education they pursue by requiring the Secretary of Education to collect separate data on the cost and price of both undergraduate and graduate education. It will help parents and students make informed decisions about the school they choose by requiring the Secretary of Education to make available for all schools on a yearly basis information on tuition, price, and the relationship between tuition increases and increases in institutional costs. It will also allow us to keep track of any progress made in reducing tuitions by requiring the United States General Accounting Office to issue a yearly report on college cost and tuition increases.

This legislation will reduce the costs imposed on colleges through unnecessary or overly burdensome federal regulation by requiring the Secretary of Education to undertake a thorough review of regulations regarding student financial assistance every two years, and were possible repeal, consolidate, or simplify those regulations. The Secretary will also report to Congress any recommendations he has with regard to legislative changes which would allow increased regulatory simplification. Our bill will allow colleges and universities to offer voluntary early retirement packages to tenured professors, and it will require the General Accounting Office to report to Congress on the extent to which unnecessary costs are being imposed on colleges and universities as a result of holding them to the same Federal regulations that are applied in industrial settings. We expect colleges and universities to pass these savings on to students.

This legislation will keep college affordable by ensuring that every American has simpler, more efficient access to higher education by bringing the delivery of Federal student financial assistance into the 21st century and by strengthening Federal support for innovative projects addressing issues of productivity, efficiency, quality improvement, and cost control at postsecondary institutions.

Tomorrow, under the leadership of Chairman GOODLING, the Committee on Education

and Workforce will consider the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. A few of the provisions I am introducing today have already been incorporated into that legislation. I will be offering the remainder of them as an amendment to that legislation early in the markup.

Mr. Speaker, ensuring that a quality postsecondary education remains affordable is one of the most important things we can do for our children and for American families everywhere.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, and to cosponsor the College Tuition Reduction and Information Act.

EMPTY SHELVES: 1998 SURVEY OF U.S. FOOD BANKS

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I commend to my colleagues' attention an informal survey I recently made of 60 food banks from across the nation. Their responses point clearly to the fact that food banks throughout our country are facing tremendous challenges. Despite our booming economy, demand is rising at surprising rates in most communities.

Here in Congress, most of the talk about hunger has focused on welfare and the reform bill that we passed in 1996. But when you leave Washington, the focus shifts to the food banks. That's where hungry people turn when they've run out of options, and it's where the millions of Americans who regularly donate to canned food drives send their support.

The food banks are in trouble. I am not here to rehash welfare reform, Mr. Speaker, and I was surprised that most food banks aren't interested in doing that either. As the food bank in Montgomery, Alabama put it, "We are doing our best to meet the need, and we think in the end we will help make welfare reform work." A lot of food banks expressed similar optimism, and I share their hope. I think all of us do.

Of all the ways we can make welfare reform work, food is the least expensive one. Job training, transportation to get to a job, child care, health care—these are all pricey investments. Food is an investment too—although some people talk as if food is like a carrot you dangle in front of a mule to make it go where you want it to go. That might work with animals, but it simply doesn't work with people.

Hunger makes people tired. It saps their spirit and drive. It robs them of the concentration they need to learn job skills. It forces them to focus on where the next few meals are coming from—instead of on finding a job, or holding one. And it makes them prone to get sick, from every flu bug that comes around, on up to some very serious diseases.

When Congress enacted welfare reform, we increased federal support for food banks by \$100 million—but the money inserted into the gap between need and supply is falling far short. We originally took away \$23 billion from food stamp recipients. But we gave just \$100 million to food banks. With that, they are struggling to provide just a few days worth of emergency food to the people who've lost their food stamps, or whose food stamps don't last the entire month. It's just not enough.

It made common sense to increase our support for food banks significantly, and we did just that. With evidence that this still falls impossibly short of what is needed—and that many food banks simply cannot make it without more support—it makes common sense to revisit the decision on the appropriate amount of additional support.

This survey of food banks adds to the evidence of booming demands on food banks. It is not designed to be a statistical analysis. But it does provide perspective from around the country—a window on what is happening in communities of every size.

What I found most striking overall is that, of the food banks that estimated the increase in demand for food, 70% reported demand grew much faster than 16%. That is the rate reported in a December 1997 survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors that shocked me, and many other Americans. And yet so many food banks are reporting even higher rates. I think it underscores the fact that poverty reaches beyond our cities. It scars rural communities and suburban ones too—a fact that many people overlook when they conjure in their minds the image of a welfare mom, or a food stamp recipient, or someone in line at the local food pantry.

Beyond that, the story of hunger in America that the food banks are documenting is an individual one. It increasingly features working people, whose low-wage jobs don't pay enough to put food on the table. Often, it includes people for whom hunger is a symptom of deeper problems—of illiteracy, a lack of education, a history of substance or domestic abuse. But equally often it includes people who are trying to climb out of their problems, trying to improve their prospects and willing to participate in initiatives aimed at giving them the tools they need. And, when the story includes a food bank, it always features people doing the Lord's work—and in increasingly creative ways. The survey describes some of those approaches, and I think many of them deserve attention and praise.

The food banks, and the hungry people who are doing their best to escape poverty, cannot do it alone. We need a range of initiatives to fill the gaps, and I will be using this survey to support my work on at least three ideas: First, and most immediately, the food banks need more money. I am working on a bill now, but the fact is that even millions of dollars would be a small investment in making sure that welfare reform succeeds. I'm also looking into including the President's request for \$20 million to support gleaning initiatives, because food banks rely heavily on gleaned food.

Second, we need to end the tax law's discrimination against charitable donations from farmers and businesses who want to donate food. Current law says the value of food is nothing more than the cost of its ingredients—which already are deducted as a cost of doing business.

That means it makes no difference to the green eyeshades in "Accounting" whether the food is donated or dumped. In fact, it costs a few pennies more to donate the food (in transportation or labor costs). The same is true for farmers: why not plow under unsold crops, if it costs you time or money to donate them instead? Many businesses and farmers donate food anyway—but many more probably would if we treat food as a charitable donation, in the same way that old clothes and other donated goods are treated.

Late last year, I introduced the Good Samaritan Tax Act, HR 2450, and I urge my colleagues to support that. I also am looking into ways we can remove obstacles to trucking companies and others who can help get food to hungry people.

Third, we must increase the minimum wage. As the Latham, New York food bank put it, "The fastest growing group of people being served by food pantries is the working poor. That is a disgrace. Minimum wage should lift people out of poverty."

There are other good anti-hunger initiatives as well, but if we are serious about answering the clear call of food banks in trouble, these three ought to be at the top of the agenda.

Food banks have been doing the hard work on the front lines of fighting hunger for decades. They are supported by their communities, and they are the organizations that increasing numbers of citizens turn to. In my own state of Ohio, one in nine people seek emergency food assistance every month, according to a September 1997 report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

When I visited my local food bank in Dayton recently, I was amazed to find it was the same place I had come often in the past. Then, the shelves were brimming with food—and good food too. Lately, the shelves have been empty, and when I visited it seemed they contained more marshmallows than nutritious staple foods. I was able to convince Kroger to make a generous donation to help Dayton's food bank. I urge my colleagues to see for themselves what is happening in their own communities, and to lend a hand in whatever way you can to answer this growing need.

Increasing numbers of people are so hungry they're willing to stand in line for food, Mr. Speaker. I cannot rest knowing that, too often, there is no food at the end of that line. I urge my colleagues to take a look at this survey, which is available from my office, and to see the situation for themselves in their own communities.

IT'S TIME TO COMPENSATE FILIPINO VETS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of providing fair equity to the Filipino veterans of World War II.

I represent many Filipino veterans in Congress, and I have witnessed their fortitude and love of country and heard many accounts of their bravery and dedication in the face of battle.

Sadly, these veterans—despite their service and sacrifice—are not considered to have been in "active service", and are thus not eligible for full veterans benefits. Many of these veterans served in the battle of Bataan, were subject to the horrors of the Bataan Death March, and fought against the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. No one can argue that they did not earn their right to be considered World War Two veterans—yet current law does just that.

I am hopeful that we are moving closer to finally providing these brave and honorable people the benefits they have earned and de-

serve. In the 104th Congress, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a resolution expressing strong support for Filipino veterans. This year, the President's budget request actually includes funding—\$5 million—for benefits for these veterans.

Now is the time to give equal treatment to Filipino veterans. Over 180 Members of Congress, including myself, have cosponsored H.R. 836, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which would provide all Filipino veterans full and equal benefits available to other veterans of the Second World War. This legislation is long overdue and, especially given how little the House of Representatives is scheduled to consider this year, there is no reason not to enact this bill in this session of Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support the President's request for funding for Filipino veterans, and push for swift consideration of H.R. 836. It is the least we can do for those who fought so bravely in the defense of our country.

TRIBUTE TO ROSA R. AND CARLOS M. de la CRUZ

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rosa R. and Carlos M. de la Cruz, Sr. on receiving the Simon Weisenthal Center National Community Service Award. Mr. and Mrs. de la Cruz are being honored for their outstanding commitment to the community. Over the past several years, they have worked together to improve education and social services, promote the arts, help the underprivileged, and foster better relations for all people.

The de la Cruz family defines caring. Born in Havana, Cuba, Carlos and Rosa de la Cruz moved to Miami in 1975. Since arriving in South Florida, they have been a wonderful example of charitable giving, devoting time to education, social services, and the world of art and artists. In 1997, they received the coveted Alexis de Tocqueville Award for Outstanding Philanthropy from the United Way.

Carlos de la Cruz's leadership and enduring generosity is a beacon for us all. For six years, he chaired the development committee for the University of Miami. He also established a Black Educational Scholarship Fund at Florida International University and raised endowment for a campus for Belen Preparatory School. In 1990, Carlos became the first Cuban American to chair the United Way campaign. He helped guide the creation of a United Way program called GRASP to help Cuban and Haitian refugees get off to a good start in our country. Among his accomplishments, Carlos de la Cruz has received the Silver Medallion Brotherhood Award from the National Congregation of Christians and Jews, the Distinguished Service Award from Florida International University, and the Social Responsibility from the Urban League.

Rosa de la Cruz has shared her talent to the world of art. She serves on the Exhibitor Committee of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Acquisition Committee of the Miami Art Museum and is actively involved with the Museum of Contemporary Art of North Miami. She has helped countless contemporary artists express their talents and themselves.

I wish Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz the best on receiving this prestigious honor from the Simon Weisenthal Center. Their leadership and ability to inspire others is truly admirable and I know that they will continue on their benevolent path.

JOAN DUNLOP: LEADER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary career and accomplishments of Joan Dunlop, one of the world's truly outstanding leaders for women's health.

As the President of the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), Ms. Dunlop has successfully transformed a once small organization into an agency with a genuinely global scope. Widely recognized as a top authority on women's health and population policy, IWHC now supports some fifty projects in eight countries, enlists the talent and energy of thousands of committed activists and policymakers, and helps countless individuals make sensible health and family planning decisions.

Thanks to Ms. Dunlop, debate about reproductive health and population policy has achieved a new prominence at international conferences, and a greater claim on the attention of global decision-makers. She was instrumental in shaping the agenda of the 1994 United Nations Conference on Population and Development and the Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995.

Ms. Dunlop came to the IWHC after an already distinguished career in philanthropy and public service. She worked with the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Family, helped develop strong leadership at the Population Council, served as the vice-president of the Public Affairs Division of Planned Parenthood, and as the Executive Assistant to the President of the New York Public Library.

Mr. Speaker, on April 20, the staff, supporters, and friends of the IWHC will gather to honor Joan Dunlop and celebrate her inspiring contribution to the cause of women's health world-wide. I wish to add my heartfelt thanks and express my passionate belief in the goals to which Joan Dunlop has devoted her professional life.

INTRODUCTION OF "THE PATIENT RIGHT TO INDEPENDENT AP- PEAL ACT OF 1998"

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation guaranteeing Americans one of the most fundamental of patient's rights: the right to appeal adverse decisions made by health insurance companies.

"The Patient Right to Independent Appeal Act of 1998" ensures patients the ability to receive an independent, unbiased review of their cases when their plan decides to deny, reduce or terminate coverage in these circumstances: